



CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

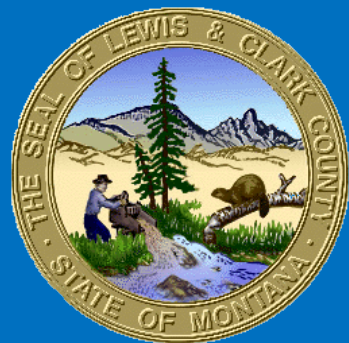
2019 Report to the Community

Lewis and Clark County

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OVERVIEW

The Lewis and Clark County Criminal Justice Services Department was established in summer 2017 and fully implemented the following December. Since then, great strides have been made to build several programs from ground-zero. While there have been many direct benefits to the community, and more importantly, individual lives, time will also prove what is working well and what programs may need modified. As we work to improve our community and benefit its citizens, we continue to seek new solutions and partner with community organizations, other government agencies, and the public. This report highlights the program at its one-year mark and the direction it is going.

Mission

To promote the safety of the citizens of Lewis and Clark County, the efficient and just treatment of defendants and offenders, the protection and healing of victims, and to work toward prevention of crime and the reduction of recidivism.

The Criminal Justice Services Program encompasses the following programs:

Pretrial Services Program
Data Program
Early Childhood Intervention
Mental Health

Partners include, but are not limited to:

- State of Montana First Judicial District Court
- Lewis and Clark County Justice Court
- Helena Municipal Court
- East Helena Municipal Court
- Lewis and Clark County Commission
- Helena Police Department
- Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office
- Lewis and Clark County Attorney's Office
- Lewis and Clark County Youth Probation Office
- Department of Corrections Adult Probation and Parole Bureau
- Office of the Public Defender, Region IV
- City of Helena
- City of East Helena
- Friendship Center
- Citizen's Advisory Council
- Montana Health Care Foundation
- State of Montana Office of the Supreme Court
- United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS TO-DATE

- In July 2017, Lewis and Clark County and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council applied for and won a grant from the Montana Health Care Foundation for a Criminal Justices Services Department.
- A Director was hired in December 2017.
- In November 2017, the citizens of Lewis and Clark County voted for a 15-year operational mill levy to, in part, fund the goals of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council through operation of the new Criminal Justice Services Department.
- The Criminal Justice Services Department officially launched in December 2017.
- Two Pretrial Officers were hired for the Pretrial Services Program. The Lewis and Clark County Program is one of five in Montana selected by the State Supreme Court to pilot a research-based Pretrial Program and receive technical assistance from the Arnold Foundation.
- In May 2018, Lewis and Clark County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council was appointed a seat on the National Network of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils.
- A full-time licensed Mental Health Therapist has been hired for the jail.
- A full-time Behavioral Health Coordinator has been hired to coordinate services for defendants and offenders released from jail.

IN THE WORKS

- The department is contracting with United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area to research best practices for stopping the familial cycle of criminal justice involvement. United Way will gather baseline data and research proven programs for system-involved families with children ages 0-3 and will submit a report.
- The department is contracting with The Justice Management Institute to assess the data systems and data used throughout the criminal justice system in Lewis and Clark County. The Justice Management Institute will submit analysis and recommendations for consolidated data gathering.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council was created in 2012. It is comprised of people involved in the Criminal Justice system in Lewis and Clark County and serves as an advisory council to the Board of County Commissioners. It's principal mission is to study the County's juvenile and adult criminal justice system; identify deficiencies; raise public awareness of the unique needs of the system; coordinate efforts; and formulate policy, plans and programs to improve the system.

Citizens Advisory Council (CAC)

The Citizens Advisory Council was formed by the Board of County Commissioners in 2012 to act as an advisory group to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. The primary purpose of the CAC is to solicit citizen input and make recommendations as part of the CJCC's responsibility to study and then make improvements to the local criminal

justice system to achieve the highest levels of public safety and program cost and effectiveness. The CAC has contributed to a number of important issues, including:

- Researched, prepared and presented reports to the CJCC on five unique criminal justice issues. These five reports and recommendations were unanimously accepted by the CJCC and the County Commissioners.
- Actively supported the successful ballot initiatives approved by voters: a construction bond to remodel and expand the existing detention facility and an operational mill levy for the development of programs to help manage the detention population growth and maintain public safety.
- Created the Department of Criminal Justice Services whose function is to assist the courts and other county officials implement new, and better manage existing local criminal justice programs.

SPOTLIGHT: PRETRIAL SERVICES

- The Pretrial Services Program is a cornerstone of the Criminal Justice Services Department. Launched in May 2018, the Program aims to reduce the number of individuals sitting in jail while they wait up to nine months for their trial date. Defendants in the Pretrial Services Program, who would otherwise be detained in the jail, save the County \$120 a day. There are approximately 250 defendants in the Pretrial Services Program living in the community. That's a \$30,000 per day savings to the County!
- A Public Safety Assessment, or PSA, is used for all defendants booked into the Lewis and Clark County Detention Center. The assessment tool registers the risk level for each defendant and is sent to the courts to assist the judges in determining release conditions for each defendant, including recommendation for assignment to the Pretrial Services Program in place of money bond.
- Assignment to the Program means a defendant does not sit in jail for up to nine months waiting for their trial date. Instead, defendants are able to work, care for their families and contribute to the economy rather than overcrowd the jail at a cost to taxpayers.
- Defendants assigned to the Pretrial Services Program meet with a pretrial officer on a regular schedule. The officers help assist defendants with access to housing, chemical dependency treatment, physical and mental health care, employment and other community services.
- The defendant is released from the Program after their final court hearing. Whether found innocent or guilty, because of the Pretrial Services Program, they have had the opportunity to maintain their livelihoods and families during the time they might have otherwise been in jail.

REAL PEOPLE, REAL IMPACTS

Andrew*

Arrested at age 19 on a drug charge, Andrew was assigned to the Pretrial Service Program. Pretrial Officer Jason Sexton met with Andrew for his initial interview and learned about Andrews' history, life and dreams. Officer Sexton began meeting with Andrew on a regular basis. He introduced Andrew to Helena Job Service where Andrew successfully found a job he enjoyed with a steady paycheck. Officer Sexton also learned Andrew is a talented artist and has a keen understanding of computers. He helped Andrew enroll at Helena College in the Information Technology program. Andrew recently finished his first semester with straight A's.

John*

Arrested for a third DUI, John has struggled with addiction most of his life. Assigned to the Pretrial Services Program, John was ordered to twice-a-day alcohol testing while waiting for his court date. Three weeks in, John tested positive for alcohol and was returned to jail. The Pretrial Services Program staff came up with a plan to help John while keeping the community safe and decreasing the jail population. They reached out to Boyd Andrew Community Services and arranged for them to go to the jail and complete a chemical dependency evaluation. With the chemical dependency evaluation in hand, they reached out to the Montana Chemical Dependency Center in Butte and secured a 30-day treatment bed for John. Reaching out to Boyd Andrew again, they requested transportation with a Peer Support Specialist from Helena to Butte. Working with the County Attorney's Office, the court and jail staff, it was arranged for the Peer Support Specialist to pick up John at the jail and drive him straight to the Montana Chemical Dependency Center.

Bob*

In his early 50s, Bob arrived at the Pretrial Services Program office immediately after being released from the jail. He was angry and didn't understand the conditions of his release. He said he wanted to go home; however, the judge had implemented a no-contact order between Bob and his wife and Bob was not allowed to go home. Remaining calm, a Program staff member learned Bob suffered two traumatic brain injuries and struggled with his mental health. He had medications but didn't know where they were. He stated, emphatically, that he was going back to his home and didn't care about the no-contact order. Program staff jumped to action to ensure the victim was safe and Bob's mental health was addressed. God's Love provided a bed for Bob and Our Place Drop In Center helped him access his prescription medications. The Mental Health Therapist at the jail stayed in contact to facilitate success. The Program notified the City's Victim Advocate and the Helena Police to do welfare checks for the victim. Our community came together to help Bob and his wife. Two days later, Bob stopped by Pretrial Services. Back on his medications, he exhibited entirely new behavior. He was softer and had a laugh. Although he still wasn't happy he couldn't go home, he understood. Bob stops by the office almost every day to say hello and let staff know how he's doing. Program staff have helped him enroll in anger management classes.

*Names have been changed to protect anonymity.